

The President's Daily Brief

12 April 1971

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

12 April 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communist forces are maintaining heavy pressure against Fire Support Base 6 in South Vietnam's central highlands. (Page 1)

In Laos, government forces are forming a new defensive line around the Long Tieng complex. (Page 2)

On Page 3, we report on the Ceylonese insurrection,

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In Pakistan, government troops are continuing to advance on several fronts [redacted]

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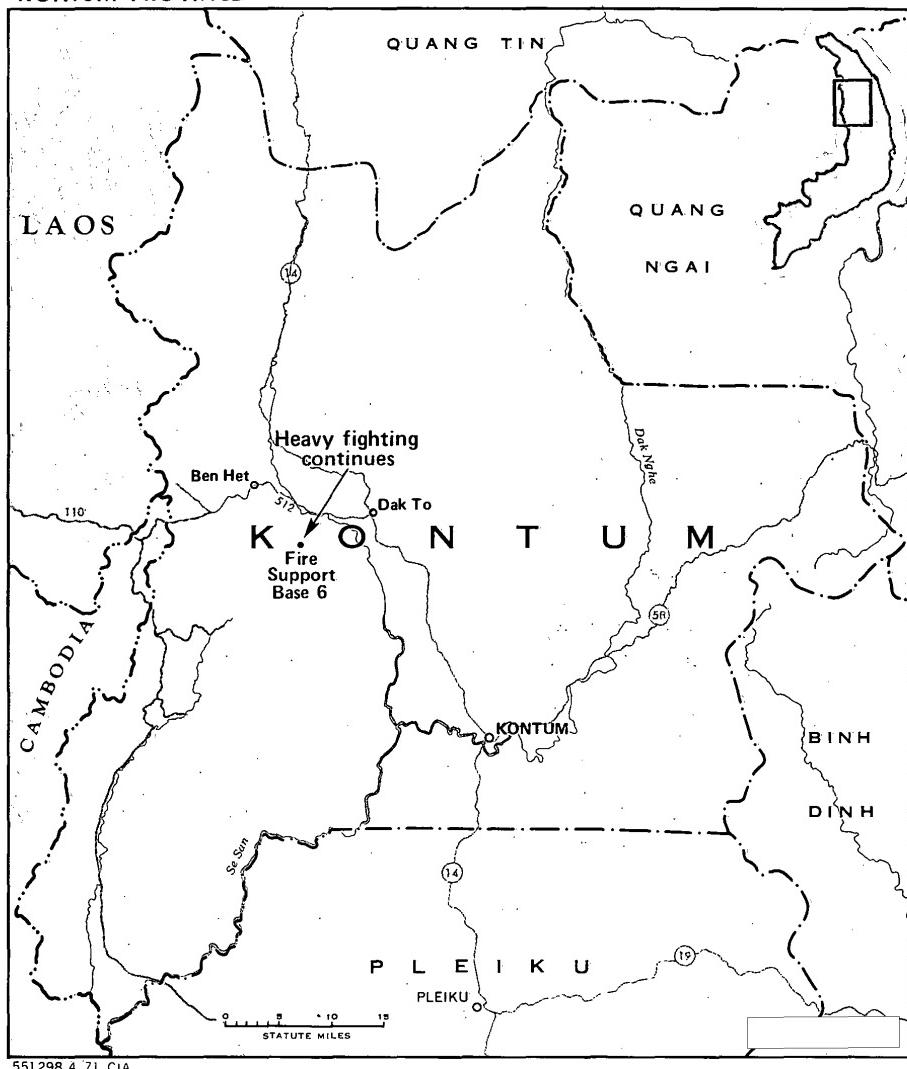
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(Page 4).

The fedayeen withdrawal from Amman has eased tensions in the Jordanian capital, but security conditions in northern Jordan are likely to worsen as a result. (Page 5)

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KONTUM PROVINCE



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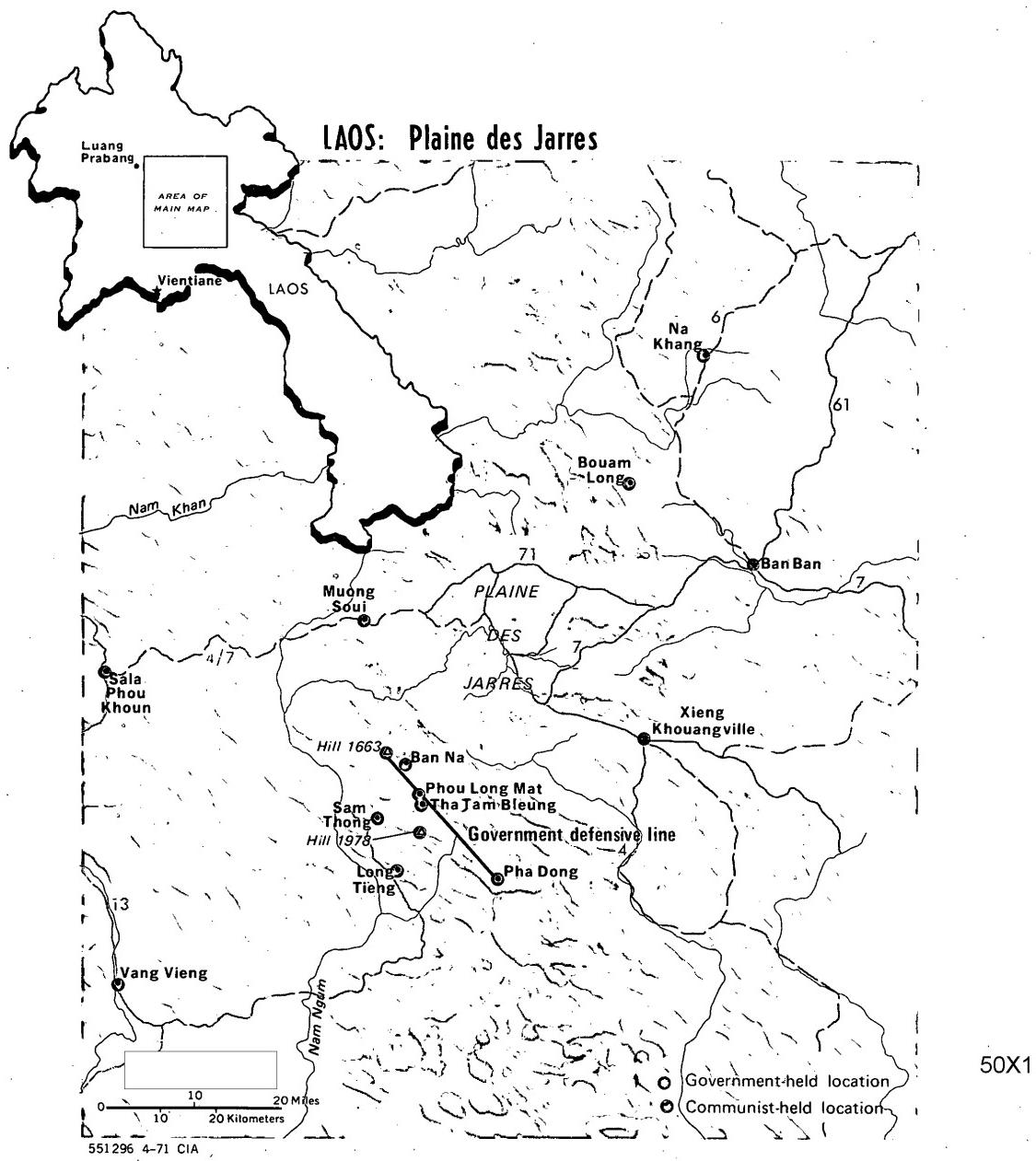
SOUTH VIETNAM

Fighting was heavy around Fire Support Base 6 in the central highlands over the weekend and press reports indicate that South Vietnamese forces are having difficulty getting new supplies. Heavy Communist antiaircraft fire has apparently prevented all but small amounts of supplies from being air-dropped in. Intercepted enemy messages indicate that two battalions of the North Vietnamese 40th Artillery Regiment are moving closer to the camp.

These battalions, which were previously identified in the general area, will increase enemy firepower against the base and may strengthen enemy defenses against air strikes. This apparent new reinforcement follows a prisoner report that elements of the 3rd Regiment of the North Vietnamese 2nd Division have also been sent to reinforce the two regiments already there. These two regiments--the 66th and 28th--have taken heavy casualties, mostly from B-52 strikes, according to the South Vietnamese defenders.

The enemy has staged heavy attacks in the central highlands in the dry season for the past several years. The intensity of the current fighting suggests, however, that the Communists may want to test how well the South Vietnamese there can fight without help from US ground forces.

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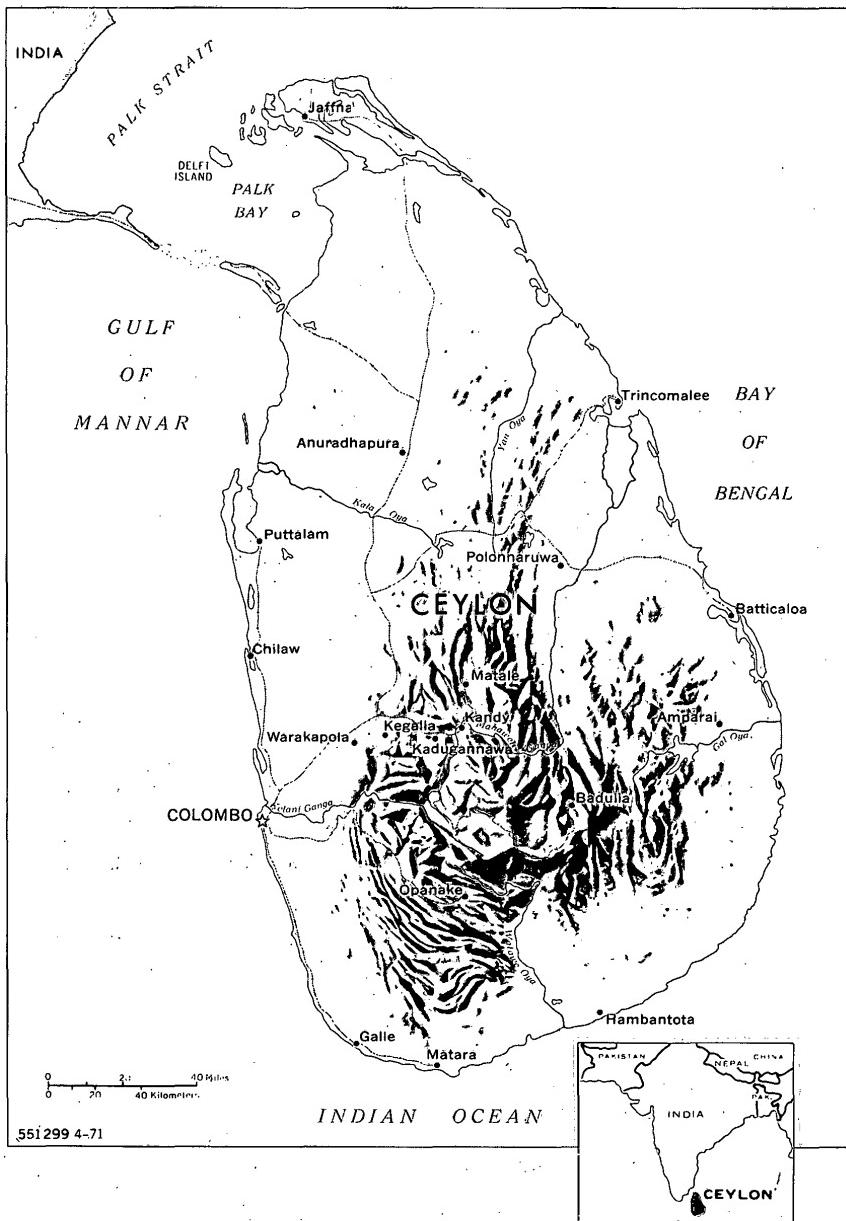
LAOS

Government forces are planning to form a new defensive line around the Long Tieng complex now that the Ban Na artillery site has fallen. The line will stretch from defense positions west of Hill 1663 in a southeasterly direction through Phou Long Mat and Tha Tam Bleung, and will terminate at Pha Dong. Howitzer batteries are to be deployed at either end of the line, as well as at key positions near Phou Long Mat.

Communist forces maintained pressure against government strongpoints over the weekend but no major positions changed hands. Irregular forces on two ridge positions between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung were engaged in sharp fighting on Saturday; those on Hill 1978 beat back an attack by an estimated 100-150 North Vietnamese troops. The irregulars expect stronger Communist attacks, and intercepted communications from elements of the North Vietnamese 312th and 316th divisions indicate that such attacks are being planned.

The government's planned offensive to relieve enemy pressure on the Luang Prabang area is slowly getting started. Resistance has thus far been light, but enemy communications indicate that elements of the North Vietnamese 335th Independent Regiment--the major Communist force threatening the royal capital--are planning a stiff defense of their newly won positions.

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CEYLON

The insurrection continues to be centered in the area between Colombo and Kandy in the interior and around Anuradhapura in the north. On midnight Saturday, however, insurgents attacked a police station on the Colombo waterfront, arriving and departing by sea.

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The government reaction continues to be disorganized. Apparently it has no clear information on how many police stations have been attacked, where troops have been sent, or how many are available. The government has called for volunteers to strengthen the army, but political factions are getting into the act. Officials of two Marxist junior partners in Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition are organizing a home guard auxiliary.

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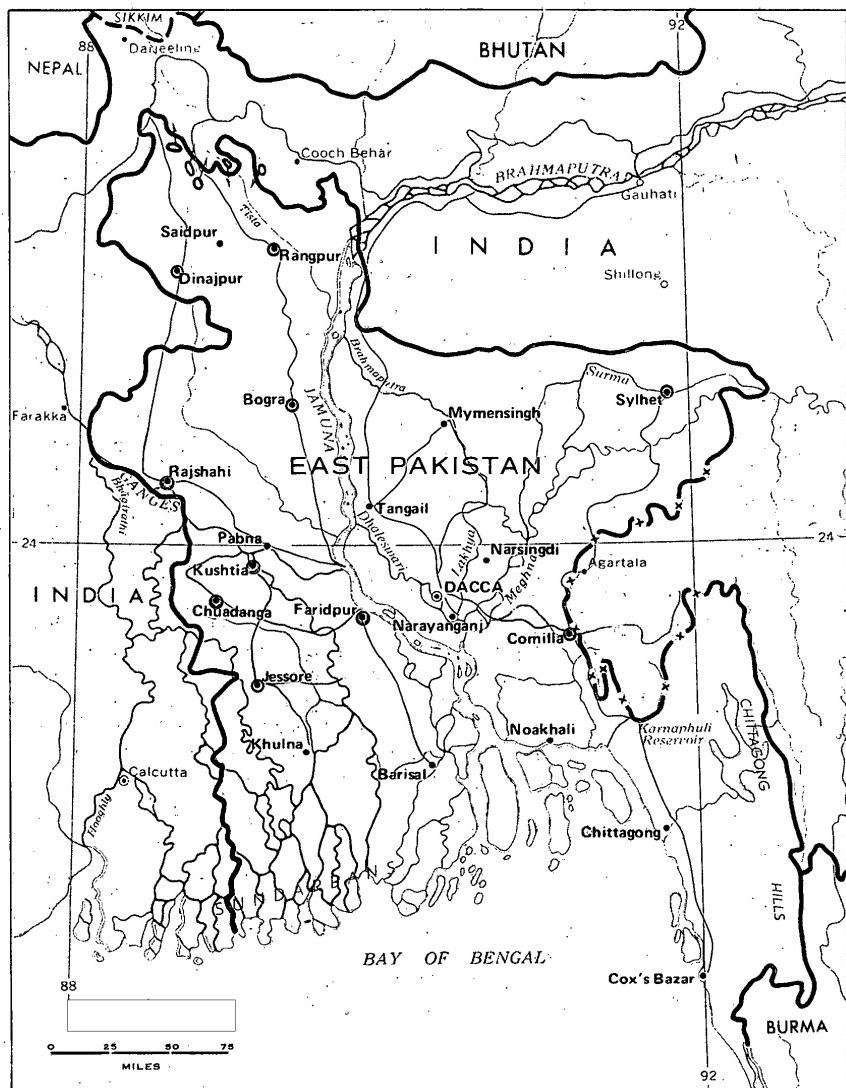
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PAKISTAN

Government troops evidently have continued to advance on several fronts, and the normally pro-Bengali Press Trust of India reported yesterday that they had taken the major river town of Pabna. Other reports indicated that fighting was still going on in or near Sylhet, Comilla, Rangpur, Bogra, Jessore, Dinajpur, and Rajshahi.

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[redacted] Chittagong [redacted] is firmly in the hands of the military but [redacted] army control extends only about six miles into the countryside. [redacted] the port has been inactive for two weeks, and [redacted] at least 28 ships are waiting to be unloaded--many of them carrying PL-480 grain. [redacted] Dacca's port city of Narayanganj as "virtually uninhabited."

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Pakistan continues to allege direct Indian involvement with the rebels

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JORDAN - ARAB STATES

The fedayeen have apparently withdrawn from Amman in large numbers and are moving to positions to the north and west of the city. The government followed up the evacuation yesterday with arms searches in various areas of the city that resulted in a few shooting incidents.

The fedayeen evacuation will ease tensions in the capital, although minor clashes between Jordanian security forces and remaining fedayeen are likely to continue sporadically. Security problems in northern Jordan, however, will be aggravated by the exodus of the guerrillas from Amman.

Some fighting did occur in the north of the country over the weekend.

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Meanwhile, a meeting of the chiefs of state of the quadripartite alliance states--Egypt, Sudan, Syria, and Libya--has been called for today in Cairo.

The purpose of the gathering is not clear, although the leaders of these four countries meet regularly at three-month intervals. Some discussion of the situation in Jordan will almost certainly take place, but the leaders will probably do little more than appeal for an end to the fighting.

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